

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: HEALTH SERVICES

DATE: MAY 22, 2015

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

SUPERVISORS SOKOL
CONOVER
FRASIER
MCDEVITT

COMMITTEE MEMBER ABSENT:

SUPERVISOR WESTCOTT

OTHERS PRESENT:

REPRESENTING THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH:

PAT AUER, DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH/PATIENT SERVICES
SHARON SCHALDONE, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF HOME CARE DIVISION
GINELLE JONES, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH DIVISION
TAMMIE DELORENZO, CLINICAL & FISCAL INFORMATICS COORDINATOR
TAWN DRISCOLL, FISCAL MANAGER

REPRESENTING THE OFFICE OF COMMUNITY SERVICES:

ROB YORK, DIRECTOR

REPRESENTING WESTMOUNT HEALTH FACILITY:

LLOYD COTÉ, ADMINISTRATOR

KEVIN B. GERAGHTY, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

PAUL DUSEK, COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

AMANDA ALLEN, CLERK OF THE BOARD

FRANK E. THOMAS, BUDGET OFFICER

SUPERVISORS BROCK

GIRARD

SEEBER

SIMPSON

TAYLOR

WOOD

DAVID STRAINER, TOWN OF QUEENSBURY RESIDENT

SARAH MCLENITHAN, DEPUTY CLERK OF THE BOARD

Mr. Sokol called the meeting of the Health Services Committee to order at 10:31 a.m.

Motion was made by Mrs. Frasier, seconded by Mr. McDevitt and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of the previous Committee meeting, subject to correction by the Clerk of the Board.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Pat Auer, Director of Public Health/Patient Services, who distributed copies of the agenda to the Committee members; *a copy of the agenda is on file with the minutes.*

Commencing the agenda review, Ms. Auer requested to amend Resolution No. 639 of 2013, which authorized an agreement with Greater Adirondack Home Health Aides, Inc. to provide paraprofessional care services for the Certified Home Health Agency (CHHA) and Long Term Home Health Care (LTHHC) Programs, in order to adjust the rate for Personal Care Aide services from \$25.28 per hour to \$25 per hour. She explained that Fidelis Care, New York reimbursed at a maximum rate of \$25 per hour for these paraprofessional services and it was not prudent for the CHHA and LTHHC Programs to pay a provider more than the reimbursement rate. She noted that Greater Adirondack Home Health Aides, Inc. was amenable to this change.

Motion was made by Mr. Conover, seconded by Mrs. Frasier and carried unanimously to amend Resolution No. 639 of 2013 as outlined above. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes and the necessary resolution was authorized for the June 19, 2015 Board Meeting.*

Ms. Auer requested authorization to transfer one Panasonic Toughbook T7, Serial Number S#8KKSC80429, to the Warren County Soil & Water Conservation District at no monetary value. She explained that several months prior when the new Toughbooks were received a number of the old Toughbooks had been transferred to other County Departments under the advice of the Director of Information Technology; however, she continued, since the Warren County Soil & Water Conservation District was not a Warren County Department, a resolution was necessary to complete the transfer of equipment.

Motion was made by Mr. McDevitt, seconded by Mr. Conover and carried unanimously to authorize the transfer of one Panasonic Toughbook T7 from the Health Services Department to the Warren County Soil & Water Conservation District at no monetary value as outlined above. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes and the necessary resolution was authorized for the June 19, 2015 Board Meeting.*

Ms. Auer requested a transfer of funds in the amount of \$20,000 from the Health Services-Full Time Salaries Code (A.4010 110) to the Health Services-Part Time Salaries Code (A.4010 130) to cover the cost of Per Diem Nurse salaries.

Motion was made by Mr. Conover, seconded by Mrs. Frasier and carried unanimously to approve the request for a transfer of funds as outlined above and to forward same to the Finance Committee. *A copy of the Request for Transfer of Funds form is on file with the minutes.*

Continuing, Ms. Auer requested to create and fill a new Registered Professional Nurse (RPN) position (Grade 19, annual base salary of \$42,719) effective July 1, 2015 by deleting two vacant Nurse Technician positions which had become vacant due to retirement. She explained that Nurse Technician positions were filled by Licensed Practical Nurses (LPN's) who were limited in their ability to serve patients because they were required to work under the supervision of an RPN. She further explained that since these positions had been vacated due to retirement, this was an opportune time to restructure the Department's Table of Organization, as well as the way that the Department provided services. She advised this change would result in one less employee in the Department and an overall savings of \$35,622 plus fringe benefits. Mr. Conover asked if the funding for the deleted positions would remain within the Departmental budget until the end of the year and Paul Dusek, County Administrator, replied affirmatively.

Motion was made by Mr. Conover, seconded by Mrs. Frasier and carried unanimously to create and fill the new RPN position as outlined above, thereby amend the Department's Table of Organization, and to forward same to the Personnel Committee. *Copies of the resolution request forms are on file with the minutes.*

Ms. Auer requested authorization to allow two Nursing staff members to attend the Vaccines in the 21st Century: A Summit on Disease Elimination and Reduction in Syracuse, New York on June 10-11, 2015 with all expenses to be covered by the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) with the exception of gas and tolls. She noted the staff members would use a Health Services Fleet vehicle and Committee approval was required because the travel would be for overnight.

Motion was made by Mrs. Frasier, seconded by Mr. Conover and carried unanimously to authorize attendance at the Summit as outlined above. *A copy of the Authorization to Attend Meeting or Convention form is on file with the minutes.*

Ms. Auer informed there were no referrals or pending items for the Committee this month. She mentioned an Emergency Response and Preparedness Activities monthly report was included in the

agenda packet. She noted the appearance of the report had changed slightly but the same information was presented. She said Attachment #4 in the agenda packet reflected a status report for referrals to the CHHA. Sharon Schaldone, Assistant Director of Home Care Division, said referrals to the CHHA had remained consistent. She commented that two Community Health Nurses who had previously resigned from the CHHA had resumed their former positions. She informed that one of the new CHHA's, HCR Home Care, had been unable to accept some of their referrals because they did not have the necessary staff to meet the requirements. She stated the Warren County Health Services CHHA had the necessary staff and was able to see new referrals within a 24 hour period.

Ms. Auer apprised that a Nurse had recently resigned and provided two weeks notice and the vacant position had been filled via the Out-of-Committee approval process. She said that due to the new policy on filling vacant positions, they had been able to recruit an experienced Nurse who would start her employment within the next couple of weeks.

Pertaining to the update on the animal control situation, Ms. Auer said that everything seemed to be working well and there had been no further issues. She informed the Animal Control Officer was also covering the Town of Lake Luzerne and there had been a couple of animal bites in Luzerne recently which had been handled properly.

Concerning the Report of Expenditures, Revenues, Overtime and Per Diem Use for 2014, Tawn Driscoll, Fiscal Manager, noted that the report was included in the agenda packet and marked as Attachment #2. She said the report reflected figures through the end of March and she added the month of April would be closed out next week. She pointed out that regular and overtime salaries for 2015 reflected a decrease compared to 2014. She added that 2015 part time salaries reflected an increase compared to 2014 which she attributed to a recent retirement costing \$9,454.

Regarding the Revenue and Expense Comparison Report for 2014 versus 2015, Ms. Driscoll said this report was included in the agenda packet and marked as Attachment #3. She informed that for this report she generally pulled reports from the previous year in order to compare and there was the potential that the two time periods differed by a couple of days. She pointed out the contractual expenses for 2015 were increased compared to the same time period in 2014. She asked the Committee members if they wanted her to continue to compare 2014 to 2015 using the information that she had presented in 2014 or if they wanted her to compare a particular date in 2015 to that same date in 2014. Mr. Conover opined that the current report format was working well. A brief discussion ensued.

This concluded the Health Services portion of the Committee Meeting and the Mental Health portion of the meeting commenced at 10:43 a.m.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Robert York, Director of the Office of Community Services, who distributed copies of the agenda to the Committee members; *a copy of the agenda is on file with the minutes.*

Commencing the agenda review, Mr. York requested to amend the 2015 County Budget to increase estimated revenues and appropriations in the amount of \$27,255 to reflect the receipt of grant funding from the New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services. He noted the funds represented an increase in State Aid to offset a decrease in revenues. He explained this was an increase to one of the Office of Community Services contract agencies, 820 River Street, to offset some lost revenues that they had experienced.

Motion was made by Mr. McDevitt, seconded by Mr. Conover and carried unanimously to approve the request to amend the 2015 County Budget as outlined above and to forward same to the Finance Committee. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes.*

Mr. York requested an executive session to review the medical, financial, credit and employment history of a particular person or corporation and/or matters leading to the appointment, employment, promotion, demotion, discipline, suspension, dismissal or removal of a particular person or corporation. Mr. Dusek asked for clarification purposes if the executive session was to discuss the employment history of a particular person or matters leading to the appointment of a new person. Mr. York replied it was to discuss the employment history of a particular person.

Motion was made by Mr. Conover, seconded by Mrs. Frasier and carried unanimously that executive session be declared pursuant to Section 105(f) of the Public Officers Law.

Executive session was held from 10:45 a.m. until 10:51 a.m.

Upon reconvening, Mr. Sokol mentioned that no action had been taken during the executive session.

Mr. York requested approval to fill the vacant position of Deputy Director-Clinical (annual base salary of \$65,234) due to resignation. He noted this position was critical to the functioning of the office.

Motion was made by Mr. McDevitt, seconded by Mr. Conover and carried unanimously to approve the request to fill the vacant position of Deputy Director-Clinical as outlined above and to report same to the Personnel Committee. *A copy of the Notice of Intent to Fill Vacant Position form is on file with the minutes.*

Mr. York mentioned he was considering the possibility of increasing the salary of the Deputy Director-Clinical position in order to competitively recruit good candidates. He said he would post the vacant position and analyze what the appropriate salary should be and if an increase was warranted, he would return to the Committee with a request.

This concluded the Mental Health portion of the Committee Meeting and the Westmount Health Facility portion of the meeting commenced at 10:52 a.m.

Mr. Sokol commented that although there was no official agenda for Westmount Health Facility, Lloyd Coté, Administrator of Westmount Health Facility, wanted to address the Committee.

Mr. Coté informed there had been two resignations at Westmount Health Facility within the last week: one of the resignations was his assistant who handled the payroll, comp time and unemployment paperwork and the other resignation was the employee who handled all of the billing for the facility. He noted both of the resigning employees had accepted other Warren County positions. He explained that Mr. Dusek had assisted on working with the employees' new Department Heads to allow for a smooth transition in the training of new employees. Mr. Coté reminded the Committee members that when Betsy Henkel, former Comptroller for Westmount Health Facility, had resigned to accept a position with the Department of Public Works (DPW) she continued to work for Wesmount on an as needed basis. A similar arrangement, he continued, would be made for each of the two resigning employees. He noted that both of the vacant positions would be posted and advertised. He informed that an employee had been hired for the office about three weeks prior who would be reassigned to the billing department because she had some experience with billing. He said he would be looking to hire an employee who would function as both his

assistant and a Health Facility Office Records Specialist, as well as one who would man the front desk.

Mr. Coté apprised that the Director of Nursing (DON) had also submitted her resignation this week and had accepted a position with a larger nursing home facility. He informed that the current Staffing/In-Service Coordinator would be promoted to the DON position. He pointed out that because Westmount Health Facility was in the process of being sold, it was difficult to recruit new employees.

Overall, Mr. Coté reported that everything continued to operate smoothly at Westmount Health Facility and the care of patients continued to be excellent. Due to the pending sale of the facility, he said, these types of resignations had been anticipated, especially for long time County employees who were interested in seeking other County positions.

Regarding vacant positions which were difficult to fill, Mr. Coté informed there had been a vacant Nurse Manager #1 position for more than three months. He noted this position was being covered by agency nurses which was costly. He advised he had contacted Centers Health Care (CHC) about the vacant positions because at this point any staffing changes he made would affect CHC when ownership of the facility was transferred to them. Mr. Coté advised that the problem with filling the vacant Nurse Manager #1 position was the salary level which was lower than that offered in the private sector. He explained there were five Registered Nurses (RN's) at Westmount Health Facility who made up the management team. Those positions, he continued, were the DON, the Staffing/In-Service Coordinator, the MDS (Minimum Data Set) Coordinator, and Nurse Manager #1 and #2. He noted the Nurse Manager #2 had been on staff for about a year and a half and the Nurse Manager #1 position had been vacant for the last three months.

Mr. Coté proposed an increase in salary for the MDS Coordinator and Staffing/In-Service Coordinator positions to an annual base salary of \$65,000; he added he also wanted to increase the salaries of the Nurse Manager #1 and #2 positions to \$60,000. He mentioned that these salary levels had been discussed with CHC and were well within the salary ranges they were willing to pay for management positions. He advised that increasing the salaries of these four positions would allow the continued operation of Westmount Health Facility until the sale was finalized. He pointed out that he had not had any success in attracting qualified candidates for the vacant Nurse Manager #1 position at the current salary level.

Mr. Conover agreed that long time County employees were seeking employment in other County Departments in order to remain in the retirement system. He stated the County had a responsibility to ensure the continued care of the residents of Westmount Health Facility. He said it was vitally important to maintain the staffing levels of the facility in order to ensure that proper care was provided. He requested clarification on the requested salary increases.

Mr. Coté said the first two positions reported directly to the DON and he explained the Staffing/In-Service Coordinator position took care of infection control and acted as the assistant to the DON. He further explained the MDS Coordinator position was necessary for financial reasons and generated a significant amount of revenue for the facility. He said the current salary for both positions was approximately \$56,000 and he was requesting an increase to \$65,000 for both positions. Mr. Conover commented this was a cost of about \$18,000 per year which would be prorated based on the date of the closing. He asked the approximate closing date and Mr. Dusek replied it would be about 6 months. Mr. Conover noted these salary increases would result in an additional cost of approximately \$9,000 until the sale of the facility. Mr. Coté informed the current salary for the Nurse Manager #1 and #2 positions was approximately \$54,000. He noted these

positions were currently entitled to overtime but he was certain they would be salaried positions under the ownership of CHC. He requested an increase for the Nurse Manager #1 and #2 positions to \$60,000. Mr. Conover said these two salary increases would result in a cost of \$6,000 over the next 6 months. Mr. Sokol asked if there would be any change in salary for the DON position and Mr. Coté replied the salary would remain about the same. Mr. Conover mentioned the salary increases for the four positions would result in a cost of approximately \$15,000 for the next six months. Mr. Coté mentioned that the current cost of agency nurses was about \$2,200 every two weeks.

Motion was made by Mr. Conover, seconded by Mr. McDevitt and carried unanimously to approve the request to fill the vacant position of Director of Nursing backfilling any vacant positions resulting from promotion and to forward same to the Personnel Committee; as well as to increase the salaries of the Staffing/In-Service Coordinator position to \$65,000, the MDS Coordinator position to \$65,000 and the Nurse Manager #1 and #2 positions to \$60,000 and to forward same to the Personnel Committee. *Copies of the resolution request forms are on file with the minutes.*

Mr. Taylor asked if these employees would be secure in their positions given that CHC was amenable to the proposed salary increases and Mr. Coté replied affirmatively. Mr. Sokol advised he had been Chairman of the Health Services Committee for several years and he commended the staff of Westmount Health Facility for continued smooth operation of the facility. Mr. Conover stated that he felt the reduction in the cost of agency nurse fees would more than offset the salary increases for the four positions.

As there was no further business to come before the Health Services Committee, on motion made by Mrs. Frasier and seconded by Mr. Conover, Mr. Sokol adjourned the meeting at 11:06 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Charlene DiResta, Sr. Legislative Office Specialist